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Two Women Sentenced to Prison for Insurance Fraud

Mele Vi and Siosi Tualanga, both from Salt Lake County, were sentenced last week in federal court for their role in an insurance fraud scheme that netted over \$70,000.

In November the pair were indicted and arrested on communications fraud and identity theft for their role in committing insurance fraud against Liberty Mutual Insurance Company. Mele Vi used the personal information of Melanie Kaivelata and Siosi Tualanga filed a claim against Kaivelata's home owners policy. She claimed that Kaivelata's dog entered Tualanga's yard and knocked her off her ladder causing \$72,000 worth of pain and suffering. Upon receiving the settlement check Vi and Tualanga cashed the check at Check City and split the proceeds.

Mele Vi has been sentenced to one year and one day in federal prison for the wire fraud charges. Once her sentence is served she will get 24 months of federal probation. Mele has also been ordered to pay restitution of \$70,000 to Liberty Mutual. She is to self-surrender to a federal prison in the Phoenix area by July 31, 2006.

Siosi Tualanga was sentenced to eight months in federal prison for her guilty plea to wire fraud. Judge Greene gave her four months in a halfway house and four months home confinement with an ankle monitor. Afterward she will be on probation for 36 months. Siosi has also been ordered to pay restitution of \$70,000 to Liberty Mutual.

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